Miscellanea.

THE ROADS OF ENGLAND.—In an article on this subject, the *Economist*, after speaking of the British trackways and the Roman roads, goes on to describe the subsequent history of English roads, from which we condense the following particulars:—During the Saxon period, and down to the reign of Henry the Seventh, when trade began to increase, the state of the roads was very bad. During Henry the Eighth's reign several acts were passed for the safety and improvement of different district roads, and for making new roads. Increased attention was paid to this subject during the reigns of Elizabeth, James the First, and Charles the First; and in 1662 a general Highway Act was passed. In the following year, 1663, the first turnpike Act was passed, and a toll levied on passengers for repairs. Hitherto the road Acts had been supplementary to the common-law liability of the parishes to repair the highways. The first Turnpike Act, that of 15 Charles II. c. 1, was confined in its operation to the counties of Hertford, Cambridge, and Huntingdon, the chief object being to improve the post-road between London and York. Under that Act the tolls were levied at one place only in each county. Other Turnpike Acts were passed in the reign of William III.; but it was not until about the year 1770 that the turnpike road system was extensively adopted. During the subsequent reigns not only were local turnpike Acts passed for all parts of every district, but many general Acts were passed for the maintenance and amendment of the highways, and for the extension, regulation, and improvement of the turnpike system. In 1835 all the Acts relating to highways were repealed or consolidated; and that statute has been amended by subsequent Acts of the present Queen. The General Turnpike Acts, which were also numerous, were consolidated in 3 George IV. c. 126, which is the existing General Turnpike Act, some minor alteration having been made therein by subsequent statutes. Since 1831 general Acts have been passed from time to time to continue the terms of local Turnpike Acts, which, being only granted for defined periods, were about to expire. In the Turnpike Trusts Continuance Acts of 1849 and 1850, there are provisions requiring every turnpike trust to appropriate its surplus income to the formation of a sinking fund to liquidate its debt. This has been attended with beneficial results. An Act was also passed in 1949 to facilitate the union of trusts.

STATISTICS OF RENOWN AND CELEBRITY.—A German periodical states that a pretty near calculation of the celebrity of any person can be made, nowadays, from the exact number of *times* his name is *struck* off in books and periodicals, enjoying, of course, more or less circulation. If, says the German calculator, the name of a person has been struck off 100,000 times, his renown = one week's duration in the neighbourhood of the deed or work (of any sort) performed; this being a slight, temporary halo, spreading to a proportionate distance, &c. One million of name impressions = one year's renown, + a decreasing halo of 100 miles diameter. To make a name like Lessing, Dr. Johnson, Canova, &c., from fifty to sixty millions of press-strokes are required; and a world-name, like that of Byron, Goethe, Chateaubriand, Beethoven, &c., requires *astral* magnitudes of name-impressions. Napoleon and *another* name are the *most* renowned of *all* times, the number of times they have been printed exceeding all calculation. Strange vagaries our German friends indulge in.

ANTIQUITIES FROM NINEVEH.—Mr. Layard and Colonel Rawlinson have been recently superintending the reception of new arrivals from Nineveh, which Mr. Layard, we presume, had despatched before his return. They appear to consist chiefly of such articles as those said to have been found collected in a heap in the palace of the king, along with his throne, and marks of fire, which seemed to connect them with the funeral pile prepared by Sardanapalus, as happily suggested by a gentleman in Mr. Sydney Smyrke's office. Amongst them are instruments and vessels of bronze and earthenware, the use of some of them quite inexplicable for the present; also bowls and vases, many richly chased; some dozens of earthenware studs, supposed to be for harness; a very perfect bronze wine strainer, similar to those in use at the present day; the hinges of the gates of the palace; legs and feet of chairs; a curious mask of iron or bronze; richly ornamented handles of various kinds; a large wheel, or the bronze casing of it, broken into many pieces; one or two small glass vases of very beautiful colours; a quantity of cylinders about an inch and a half in length, carved or inscribed, one or two of them of a substance resembling plumbago; statue of a priest in stone, much ornamented; and, lastly, several slabs of inscriptions.

OPENING THE NEW THOROUGHFARE IN WESTMINSTER.—Sir Edwin Pearson has published a circular calling upon the local authorities in Westminster to solicit the Queen to attend the opening of the new street. He says,—"It appears to have been the custom on similar occasions respectfully to invite the sovereigns of the country to mark by their presence the parental interest they feel in public enterprises connected with the general improvement and well being of their people. In accordance with this custom our two last kings were respectively solicited to honour with their presence the opening of the Waterloo and London Bridges,—to which solicitation they most kindly condescended; and on a later occasion the City of London petitioned for a like favour from our present beloved Queen on the opening of the Coal Exchange, which request was also graciously granted, although her Majesty's attendance was prevented by indisposition, to the great grief of her devoted subjects." The day proposed (Aug. 1) is memorable as being the same on which his Majesty William IV. opened London-bridge; but more especially so, as being the anniversary of the accession of her Majesty's house to the throne of these realms.

THE BRADFORD SURVEY.—One of the competitors, Mr. Edwin P. Merrall, complains that although his own tender was 460*l.*, the undertaking has been entrusted to another, who is to have 800*l.* for the job. As to the fact of his own experience and sufficiency, Mr. Merrall states that he has "been for nearly twenty years actively engaged in the practice of every branch of surveying, engineering, &c., and frequently employed upon large works under the most eminent men in the kingdom, without having ever once failed to give complete satisfaction;"—that he was prepared "to have the entire work properly and efficiently performed;" and that, "with the present dearth of employment of surveyors and engineers, there are doubtless many others equally competent fully prepared to do the same." He cannot understand, therefore, why 400*l.* of the Bradford people's money should be uselessly thrown away on any one, and thinks that not to accept of the lowest tender, *without some sufficient reason*, destroys the very essence and spirit of competition, frustrates its intention, and reduces it to "a mockery, a delusion, and a snare."

YORKSHIRE ARCHITECTURAL SOCIETY.—The quarterly committee meeting of this society was held on Thursday in last week at York. The secretary mentioned that on the occasion of the late meeting of the Yorkshire and Lincolnshire Architectural Societies at Ripon, a memorial had been drawn up at the suggestion of Sir Charles Anderson, to be presented to Col. Wood, the proprietor of Middleham Castle, with reference to the dangerous state of a considerable portion of the ruins of that noble pile. The memorial had been entrusted to the Rev. R. E. Batty, of Ackworth, and the secretary read a communication from that gentleman, mentioning that Col. Wood had at once promised to re-inspect the ruins, and expressed his willingness to receive any suggestion from the societies with which they might favour him. Mr. Batty also gave some account of the historical associations connected with Middleham Castle.

COMPETITION AT COPENHAGEN.—About a twelvemonth ago, the magistracy of Copenhagen offered prizes of 200*l.* each for the best plans for water supply, for drainage and for gas lighting for the city of Copenhagen, and intimated that, if necessary, the prizes would be divided. They received, by the 1st of January last, somewhat over a dozen sets of plans, and which were referred to Col. Schlegel, Professor Torchhamma, and Mr. Lunde for selection. They have now made their report. No whole prize has been given; but the three prizes have been divided between Mr. Masillin, of England; English and Hanssen, of England and Copenhagen; Kühnell, of Berlin; and Colding and Lindberg, of Copenhagen. It is believed that the first and fourth have the drainage; the second and fourth the water; and the second and third the gas. As to the execution, nothing is yet decided.

A HINT TO ENGINEERS.—One of the inventions most important to a class of highly-skilled workmen (engineers) would be a small motive power—ranging, perhaps, from the force of half-a-man to that of two horses, which might commence as well as cease its action at a moment's notice, require no expense of time for its management, and be of moderate price both in original cost and in daily expense. A small steam-engine does not fulfil these conditions. In a town where water is supplied at high pressure, a cylinder and a portion of apparatus similar to that of a high-pressure engine would fully answer the conditions, if the water could be supplied at a moderate price. Such a source of power would, in many cases, be invaluable to men just rising from the class of journeymen to that of master. It might also be of great use to many small masters in various trades. If the cost per day were even somewhat greater than that of steam for an equal extent of power, it would yet be on the whole much cheaper, because it would *never consume power without doing work*. It might be applied to small planing and drilling machines, to lathes, to grindstones, grinding mills, mangling, and to a great variety of other purposes. In all large workshops a separate tool, or rather machine, is used for each process, and this contributes to the economy of the produce. But many masters in a small way are unable to afford such an expense, not having sufficient work for the full employment of any one machine. Of this class are many jobbing masters, who live by repairing machines.—*Babbage*.

DESTRUCTION OF PROPERTY AT CHIPPING.—A flood on Wednesday week did a good deal of mischief at Chipping, washing away walls, embankments, and battlements of bridges, and undermining houses. A cotton mill in the vicinity appears to have been most injured.

THE ORDNANCE SURVEY OF SCOTLAND.—We understand that the committee on the Ordnance Survey of Scotland have decided in favour of a map on a scale of one inch to the mile, as preferable to the six-inch scale adopted in Ireland. We shall be thankful for a workable map in either form. This, we understand, is promised in ten or fifteen years at the most. If the Ordnance promise this, and show that they are able to keep to their time, we may probably be content to wait so long. But if not, we trust that the feeling of Scotland, now aroused on the matter, will not be permitted again to fall asleep.—*Scotsman*.

SUSSEX MEMORIAL.—The subscribers to the fund for erecting a memorial to the memory of the late Duke of Sussex, have determined that the money subscribed shall be applied to the purpose of building an additional wing to the Royal Free Hospital, to be called the "Sussex" wing, to contain not less than 100 beds, with the addition of a marble statue, not to exceed 1,000 guineas, with a suitable inscription.

ARCHANGEL is reported to have been recently destroyed by fire. This Russian city, as our professional readers will most of them be well aware, has long been celebrated mainly for its tar, which has formed a very extensive article of export, and must doubtless have had something to do with so extensive a fatality, if literally true.

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